

CONTRACT INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATION SERVICES CODE OF ETHICS, PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENTS

Introduction:

State departments should ensure that all contract interpreters and translators utilized to perform services are required to sign and agree to uphold specified professional and ethical standards. The SPB has developed the following information as a sample of the types of conduct interpreters and translators should be required to comply with:

Ethics:

1. **Cultural sensitivity & courtesy:** Interpreters and translators shall be aware of the cultural differences that may exist and be sensitive and respectful to the individual(s) they serve.
2. **Impartiality:** The interpreter and translators shall maintain impartiality and shall not counsel, advise or project their own personal biases or beliefs. The interpreter shall avoid distorting the message in favor of one party or the other.
3. **Non-discrimination:** Interpreters and translators shall always be neutral, impartial and unbiased. Interpreters/translators shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, race, color, national origin, age, socio-economic or educational status or religious, political or sexual orientation.
4. **Conflict of interest:** Interpreters and translators shall disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest which would affect their objectivity in the delivery of services. Providing interpretation or translation services, for family members or friends may violate the individual's right to confidentiality, or constitute a conflict of interest.
5. **Withdrawal:** Interpreters and translators who are unable to ethically perform in a given situation, shall refuse or withdraw from the assignment without threat or retaliation.

Professional Conduct:

1. **Professional integrity:** Interpreters and translators shall demonstrate professionalism and personal integrity, including:
 - If the interpreter or translator believes he or she may have interpreted/translated inaccurately or incompletely, he or she will make this known and, if possible, provide a corrected interpretation/translation.
 - If the interpreter or translator believes he or she is so impacted by the content to be interpreted/translated, that he or she becomes unable to interpret/translate accurately and completely, he or she shall inform the parties of his/her intent to withdraw without threat or retaliation.
2. **Accuracy:** Interpreters and translators shall render the message faithfully, conveying the content, spirit and cultural context of the original message. This means the interpreter or translator shall interpret everything the speaker or document says without changing the meaning, conveying what is said and how it is said, without additions, omissions or alterations, but with due consideration of the cultural context of both the sender and the receiver of the message.
3. **Role boundaries:** Interpreters and translators shall maintain the boundaries of their professional role, refraining from personal involvement. This does not mean that an interpreter cannot be friendly

CONTRACT INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATION SERVICES CODE OF ETHICS, PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENTS

or develop a rapport with the person speaking, but does not represent personal involvement in their interpretation.

4. **Self-evaluation:** Interpreters and translators shall accurately and completely represent their certifications, education, training and experience.
5. **Personal demeanor:** Interpreters and translators shall be punctual, prepared and dressed in an appropriate manner and not distracting from the situation.
5. **Inability to perform:** Interpreters and translators shall assess, at all times, their ability to interpret/translate. Should interpreters or translators have any reservations about their competency to perform in any given situation, they must immediately notify the parties and offer to withdraw without threat or retaliation.
6. **Professional development and training:** Interpreters and translators shall make a reasonable effort to acquire ongoing development of their skills and knowledge through professional training, continuing education, and interaction with colleagues, and specialists in related fields.
7. **Cultural competency:** Interpreters and translators shall develop awareness of their own and other cultures in order to promote cross-cultural understanding. Interpreters and translators will strive to bridge the cultural differences between all participating parties, by seeking to minimize, and avoid potential misunderstandings based upon stereotyping and/or differing cultural practices, beliefs, or expectations. When clashing cultural beliefs or practices, a lack of linguistic equivalency, or the inability of parties to explain in their own words are encountered, the interpreter or translator may assist by sharing cultural information or helping develop an explanation that can be understood by all.

Confidentiality:

1. Interpreters and translators shall not divulge any information learned in the performance of professional duties. This includes any documents or other written materials.
2. Confidentiality is to be maintained in all situations, except when legally mandated to disclose information in specific situations such as child abuse, elder abuse, a persons threatening harm to him- or herself or others, or where the interpreter/translator determines to the best of their ability, that non-disclosure may result in harm.
3. Disclosure: Interpreters and translators shall not publicly discuss report, or offer an opinion concerning matters in which they are or have been engaged, even when the information is not privileged by law to be confidential.

Compliance:

Violations of the above standards may result in disqualification of an interpreter or translator and termination of the contract. A copy of a signed Code of Ethics, Professional Conduct and Confidentiality Statement must be maintained by the contractor for every interpreter and/or translator utilized to perform

**CONTRACT INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATION SERVICES
CODE OF ETHICS, PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY
STATEMENTS**

services under this contract. The contractor must provide a copy of the signed statement upon request of the state agency.

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that all interpreters and/or translators, as applicable, to be utilized to perform services under this agreement, have signed a Code of Ethics, Professional Conduct and Confidentiality statement that, at a minimum, contains the above information.

Signed By:

Title

Date